THE MEANING OF THE PAULINE PHRASE "THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION"

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THE MEANING OF THE PAULINE PHRASE "THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION"

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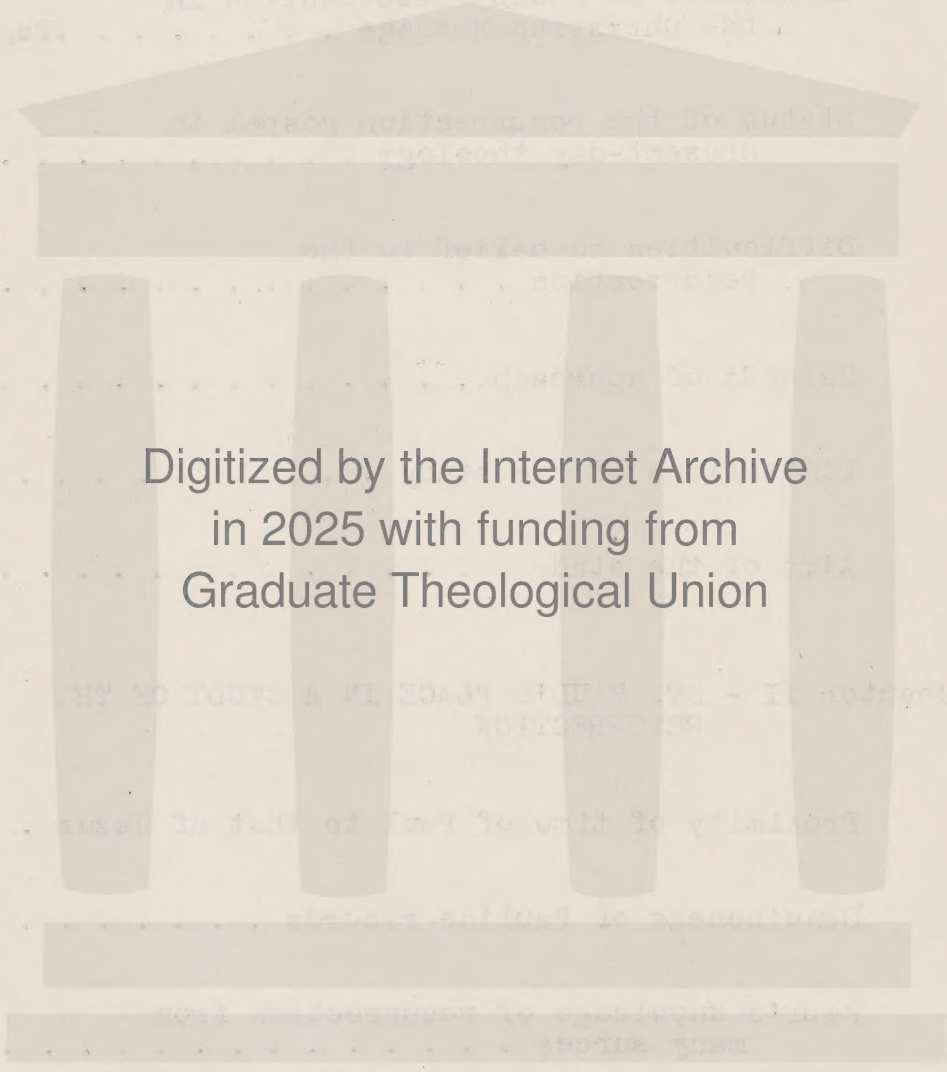

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THE MEANING OF THE PAULINE PHRASE "THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION"

CHAPTER I - Approaching the Problem.

"Yea verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . . . , that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection . . . . . ."[1]

So wrote Saint Paul, the old man, the mystic, to his beloved Philippian Church. His life was well-nigh over, and to this church, his favorite[2], he was wont to pour forth from the depth of his great soul his deepest and innermost feelings. When he expresses the fact that all of his life work and all of his aspirations are centered around the one passion - "to know the power of his resurrection" - surely the meaning of the phrase is worth the price of careful analysis.

The resurrection of Jesus and its significance for all believers in Jesus Christ[3], both in its literal and mystical aspects, is central in his Christian

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1. Philippians 3:8-10

2. Philippians 4:15,16

3. I use both the terms here advisedly to denote Paul's literal belief in Jesus and his mystical faith in Christ.

experience. All the genuine Pauline epistles,[4] except the personal note to Philemon, contain references to the resurrection in one or more of its many phases.

We may state without going into detail that resurrection was central in Paul's theology, even more, it was the central source of his dynamic life. As Adolf Deissmann says, "All that can be called Paul's Christ-mysticism is the reaction to the initial Damascus experience."[5] Paul's "Christ-mysticism is without doubt the power of his message, and it thus depends upon the impact of the living Christ upon his own personality. Hence, some aspect of 'resurrection' is central."

Further, following Deissmann again; speaking of the origins of the church from his special point of view of cult-history, a very important contribution to the study of primitive Christianity, we find that, "It was the Easter experiences of Simon Peter and the others which formed the origin of the Jesus-cult; exceptionally

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4. On the whole I am conservative in holding to the genuineness of reported Pauline letters. But the fruits of scholarship throw well-founded doubt upon the authenticity of II Thessalonians, Ephesians, and the pastoral Epistles. They shall not be used in this discussion. I am, however, pronouncing no final judgments in this question of authenticity

5. Paul, Pg. 131

moving religious experiences of exceptional people."[6] The Christian church, then, began, through its belief in the resurrection of Jesus. Karl Barth speaks of "The Resurrection Gospel as the Foundation of the Church".[7] And in this thesis he is largely right.

This belief carried the Christian Church through its first great crisis - that of its death struggle with the anti-Christ of the Roman Empire. In the struggle the Empire was destroyed and the church was badly wounded, but victorious. Glover explains this phenomena by the classic phrases, "The Christians out-thought, out-lived, and out-died, the Romans."[8] By the latter phrase he conveyed the thought that the Christians held tenaciously to a belief of a resurrection which was stronger than death at the hands of the Roman Empire.

Edward Gibbon, the famous interpreter of the period of Roman history in which Christianity was most involved, admits that the Christians had a large part in the decline and fall of the empire. The second reason for their power lay in their well defined belief in immortality in contrast to the

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6. Paul, Pg. 123

7. The Resurrection of the Dead, Pg. 125-147

8. The Jesus of History,

looseness of the Roman doctrine.[9] His skepticism held no place for the resurrection of Jesus, but in his inferences he knew it to be central.

Easter Sunday is most important today in our churches. It is a testimony of the universal feeling of the importance of the "resurrection" even in our modern day.

Dr. Hayes, expresses the fact that "the Christian faith from the first was a faith in the Resurrected one," and, "Everything hinges upon the resurrection of our Lord . . . . . It is with the resurrection that all gospel preaching must begin. It is upon the resurrection that our chief emphasis must be laid. It is in the resurrection that we find the culmination of all our hopes of present salvation and future immortality.[10]

Westcott, a scholar of two generations ago, may have exaggerated a bit the importance of the resurrection gospel, but surely his emphasis is not amiss: "When once we grasp clearly the momentous interests which are involved in the belief in the

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9. The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Chapter 15

10. Hayes, Doremus A. - The Resurrection Fact, pg. 11-13. As a whole, however, Dr. Hayes' book is disappointing.

Resurrection, we shall be prepared to understand how it formed the central point of the apostolic teaching; and yet more than this, how the event itself is the central point of history, primarily of religious history, and then of civil history of which that is the soul."[11]

Can we not say, then, that the message of the resurrection of Jesus has been of first importance in Christian history? The power of his resurrection, whatever the source of that power may be, has been the power of the Christian gospel itself.

Having therefore established the fact of the historical moment of the resurrection of Jesus, it is well that we should turn to our modern day and find the place of resurrection in present-day theology and experience.

In this field it is difficult to quote authorities that are representative of the modern attitude concerning the resurrection. Some observations may be pointed out, however.

One searches in vain for any glowing,

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11. Westcott, Brooke Foss. - The Gospel of the Resurrection, Page 6

dynamic presentation of "the power of his resurrection" on the modern scene.[12] Volumes of "Contemporary American Theology" have been published.[13] They show only passing references to the resurrection. None of the great theologians seemed to feel that the goal of their life pilgrimage could be summed up in the Pauline phrase. Theology says much of God, social living, the Bible, Christianity, Christology, Fundamentalism, and kindred subjects, but little of the resurrection! Has the power of his resurrection departed? Or has it been submerged and included in other things?

William Adams Brown and John Baillie, both of Union Theological Seminary, have written books on the subject.[14] Both are scholarly and illuminating volumes, but the highest we can say of these volumes is that they present in the words of Dr. Baillie, "a view that satisfies."[15] Some of the difficulties

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12. Please note that this statement is not made in criticism. I am here attempting an analysis only. Easter Sunday morning in evangelical Christian churches may be an exception, but even here one must criticize the wholesomeness of the gospels there proclaimed - oftentimes abundance of fire backed up only by crude thinking.
13. The two volumes compiled by Vergillus Ferm (1932-33) are most noteworthy.
14. Brown - The Christian Hope and Baillie - And the Life Everlasting.
15. And the Life Everlasting - Page

in the way of positive belief in the resurrection have been removed by these scholars, but strangely the resurrection is not a "power" with these men.

Doremus A. Hayes, of Garrett Biblical Institute, by his position, surely is a ranking scholar. But his contribution to this field[16] is of doubtful value. It is inspirational, but most of the premises upon which he builds his exposition can be badly deleted by the application of thorough scholarship, especially in the field of sources of the New Testament records. So his volume adds only to the confusion.

Encyclopedia articles are fruitful in such a study. None have been prepared within the last two decades, so little can be concluded from these sources[17] regarding our present attitude.

It is true that Karl Barth finds virile meaning in the fact of the resurrection.[18] But again, Barth's theology and world-view have been

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16. The Resurrection Fact.

17. The reader will find great value in Paul W. Schmiedel's lengthy article on Resurrection in Encyclopedia Biblica, and E.R. Bernard's treatise on the same subject in Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible. This cannot be said of Sparrow Simpson's discussion in Encyclopedia of Christ and the Gospels.

18. The Resurrection of the Dead(1932) It may be that there are other German scholars who lay emphasis upon the centrality of the resurrection gospel. Barth has the good fortune of getting his works translated into English.

so thoroughly questioned and largely found wanting,[19] that we are not sure that we can trust his emphasis here. So confusion still reigns supreme.

It is certainly true that the dynamic of the resurrection experience is not found in the theology of the masses. The man of the street either accepts the doctrine dogmatically, in which case there is no potency for our modern day, or else he becomes lost in a maze of half recognized difficulties, and the efficacy of the doctrine is lost.

It must be recognized that in each of the above cases, honesty has prevailed. Honestly, with our modern emphasis upon criticism, the modern mind finds it difficult to feel that the height of Christian experience is found in discovering "the power of his resurrection". It has been so thoroughly occupied with interpreting Christianity in the practical affairs of life, and in discovering there a "power" never before realized, that it has largely passed over the resurrection power. Or else it has incorporated it in other terms.

Again, it must be said that the difficulties standing in the way of productive attitudes toward the resurrection are great. Nowhere has historical criticism been more devastating that in this field. The

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19. Notably his emphasis upon the wholly "otherness" of God, and other distinctly Calvinistic trends.

creedal affirmation of "the resurrection of the body" "and the life everlasting" came up for the examination of the critics and fared badly. It is no wonder that it has been slow in again getting to its feet, let alone developing "Power". Scholarship has done its part well in erasing crude concepts and freeing minds from the grotesque elements of the resurrection. It has laid a foundation whereby we may find the reality of the resurrection. It is left for the mystic and the appreciative student to discover the greatness of the resurrection experience. It is at least our task to evaluate and exploit it to the greatest advantage for the Christian message.

Here it must be said, though this phase will be dealt with in more detail later, that there is a difficulty inherent in Paul's life which almost makes it impossible for the mind of today to understand his deepest meanings. I refer to the deep mystical experience of Paul. St. Paul has been called the greatest mystic of all. His own experience, which he attributed to the resurrection of Jesus, surely lies deep in the mystical field. Only another great mystic can approach the reality of such an experience. This difficulty, however, should not be insurmountable, for modern psychology has opened doors into the mind which, if rightfully applied can draw out great things from the mind of the mystic.

We should take a moment to consider methods of approach to such a study as this. It is our purpose to use in this thesis all the techniques and approaches which we have found available to Biblical scholars.

First, our approach must be scientific. The scientific method examines the smallest minutiae to determine its bearing upon any phenomenom. In our present study it shall be our purpose to examine every available source and draw no conclusions until the testimony of every element is heard. The botanist, in his careful analysis, destroys the flower in hand, knowing that there are other flowers, and that they will be made more beautiful by the destruction of one. So we must be scientific at the cost of cherished beliefs, in the faith that nothing of abiding truth will be lost and much light on existing truth gained.

Second, the historical approach must be pursued. It is impossible to study Paul without this approach. There is no place in this field for setting up theories and then finding scriptural quotations to substantiate them. The apostle himself must be approached. As he lived, thought, worked, and wrote in his world background - so he must be understood. Much use therefore will be made of the

figure of Paul and of the complex world in which he lived.

Third, this inquiry must of necessity be critical. Many uncritical approaches to the problem of the meaning of resurrection have been written in the past, and doubtless many more will come in the future. The future life, and the fact of the resurrection gives the most fertile soil for speculative imagination. A funeral sermon may wax eloquent at will upon such a subject, but withal it may be pointless. This paper is no eulogy. It will try to avoid wishful thinking. The literature in this field must be closely scrutinized, and errors noted. Else there is no need for writing this thesis. The New Testament itself must be approached with every method of critical study wide open.

Negative criticism is not the goal. Criticism, rightly interpreted, means nothing more nor less than an open-minded approach. It should bring to light positive values quite as often as it brings annulments.

The fourth approach is the appreciative. It is especially important where human factors are so intricately involved as in this study. St. Paul demands being treated as a gentleman and a scholar.

The entire conception of the resurrection of Jesus is, because of its great place in the lives and thought of great men and a great institution, to be treated with great piety. Not timidly, but reverently. Only thus can its full value be realized.

To some readers a warning is here given not to expect too much of this paper. There are definite limitations which it may be well to define at the outset.

First, this is not a discourse on immortality. Immortality will enter the discussion only as an invited guest to throw light upon conceptions of the resurrection. The fact of a world beyond this, either material or spiritual, is a philosophical study all of its own. That the soul continues to exist after death is not the point. In order to make a clear differentiation of the fact that "resurrection" alone is here involved I shall quote from Bowen's distinction between immortality and resurrection: "Immortality means simply that the soul does not perish with the body, but has an indestructable, endless existence. Resurrection, usually taking immortality for granted, means that the soul gets, after death, new embodiment and life, analagous to our present state . . . . . Resurrection cannot possibly say anything about permanent immortality; it tells only of one life-period succeeding this one."[20] We are dealing then

20. Bowen, C.R. - Resurrection in The N.T. pg. 77

only with life, either spiritual or physical, but capable of being discerned by the present life, following this life. That is resurrection.

Second, the concern here is only with the resurrection of Jesus. "The power of His resurrection is central. If that power is derived from its implications in the future life of all men, well and good. But we start from Jesus' resurrection. Any speculations not based upon this central concept are to be discarded even though they be Pauline in origin. They are irrelevant to this thesis.

Third, still further limiting the subject, the emphasis here is upon the experience of Paul alone regarding the resurrection of Jesus. In it a key may be found for a rational concept of the resurrection of Jesus, but that is not the primary question at issue. The historical fact of the resurrection as it is conceived and presented in the gospel records will be entirely lacking here . The treatise is not a plea for belief in the resurrection fact, but an analysis and evaluation of the experience of St. Paul with the living Jesus.

Thus the ground is prepared for a short statement of the aims of this paper. They are stated, not to risk conclusions at this early stage, but to

point out goals toward which the quest will lead, thus to provide direction to the pursuit.

1. It will aim to estimate the importance, small or great, of Paul's place in the entire resurrection concept.

2. It will seek the sources of Paul's concept of resurrection and relate them to his actual experience.

3. It will examine the words of Paul to determine his actual meaning.

4. It will endeavor to apply the findings of the study to the modern day, that whatever "power" is there may be used in the Christian message for today's world.

CHAPTER II. St.Paul's Place in A Study of the Resurrection.

Why study Paul in connection with the resurrection? The question may well arise, especially among circles uninformed as to the origin of our Christian concepts. Is there to be found in Paul any real light upon the mystery of the resurrection that can help us solve the problems in the minds of all Christian thinkers? If so, the study of Paul would be wonderfully rewarding. An examination and evaluation, then, of St. Paul's real place in the history of the concept of the resurrection of Jesus is of utmost importance.

1. It is important to note the proximity of the time of Paul of Tarsus to that of Jesus of history. However obscure the historicity of Jesus may have become to succeeding generations, there was certainly no obscurity in the mind of the Apostle Paul.

In point of time Paul was a contemporary of Jesus. Some writers place the date of the birth of Saul at Tarsus in the year 1 A.D., with full knowledge of the uncertainty of such date-fixing. There is no trustworthy record of Saul's early life, prior to the Damascus experience, but we do know from his writings that he had spent time in Jerusalem and was well

acquainted with the environment of Jesus.[1] The conversation of Saul has been placed at varying dates from 32 to 40 A.D. His first preserved writing dates very closely to the middle of the first century.[2] His death very likely took place under Nero, approximately 61-64 A.D., or if the theory of a second imprisonment be held, 67 A.D.

Paul's entire missionary activities took place no more than thirty-five years following the death of Jesus. He was acquainted with those who were associated with Jesus.[3] So his testimony cannot but be of supreme value. When he thus spoke "that Christ died ..... was buried.....hath been raised.....and that he appeard.....[4] , he spoke at least with authority that accompanies proximity of time.

Further than this, Paul's witness of Jesus may be considered the earliest of all. Unless Dr. Torrey is right in his thesis that the gospels were

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1. Acts 22:3
2. First Thessalonians, dated either 49 or 52 A.D. Cf. Moffatt - Introduction to the Literature of the N.T. or for concise and fairly accurate presentation of Chronology of Paul cf. Angus and Green - Cyclopedic Handbook to the Bible.
3. Acts 15 and Galatians 1
4. I Cor. 15:3-5

all written prior to 50 A.D.,[5] Paul's writings antedate the gospel records by probably two decades.[6] The difference in date here is important. In our modern day it need not be so. But a witness of Jesus, carried only from mouth to mouth, and when written, only written so in fragments, can deteriorate in accuracy to a great degree in twenty years. Furthermore, tales told in the first century were constantly mingled with current myths. A product of the year seventy A.D. can be none too pure. The witness of a contemporary of Jesus written out of his own experience with Jesus cannot be lightly disposed of as being of little value to the Christian message.

2. It is a well known fact that some of the epistles of Paul have been seriously challenged as being pseudonymous. We need not go into detail here. The results of scholarship in this field have quite thoroughly established the fact that there are letters ascribed to Paul in our New Testament canon which

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5. Torrey, C.C. - The Four Gospels A new Translation. In this theory Dr. Torrey stands virtually alone among scholars.

6. The Gospel of Mark, the earliest, cannot be dated earlier than 70 A.D., and this seems too early to many scholars.

surely cannot be from his hand. They have also brought abundant evidence to add weight to the genuineness of some of the Epistles.[7] Suffice it to say that there is abundant material in the thoroughly genuine epistles of Paul to establish his great emphasis upon the resurrection of Jesus.

Further, there is no epistle of which there is less doubt as to genuine Pauline authorship than the one to the Philippians. It is probably the last letter written by Paul.[8] The letter is filled with personal, genuinely tender, passages. When he speaks to the Philippians from the depth of his life experiences, of the "power of his resurrection", his words ring true.

3. Paul was a world-citizen. "I am debtor", he said, "both to Greeks and to barbarians".[9] He was a Roman citizen,[10] and a Jew,[11] thoroughly trained in the traditional Jewish religious concepts.[12] His home was the Greek city of Tarsus of Cilicia, one of the leading cultural cities of the Roman Empire.[13] His travels left out only Egypt and the East to include

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7. See above. Chapter I, footnote 4.
8. Unless, the second imprisonment theory be held. I do not hold to this theory, yet admit its possibility.
9. Romans 1:14
10. Acts 22:25-29
11. Acts 22:3
12. Galatians 1;14
13. Note the imaginative, though as a whole quite historic description of Tarsus in Paul's time in Spencer - Beyond Damascus, Chapter I.

the civilized world. The world was in his mind, perhaps not the highest of its culture, nor the deepest of its philosophy, but it is certainly true that whatever Paul had to say in his later years came from his world experience. Unless he was more than normally stupid he could not have travelled throughout the world as he did without absorbing a share of the world's knowledge. We may rest assured that he was not stupid.

There is little question but what he was thoroughly familiar with the principle trends of the Greek and Roman mind. He knew the decadent state of the idea of immortality in the Graeco-Roman world, and how it was again coming to a high point through a celebration of a resurrection, or revivification, in the mystery religions.[14] As a Jew he was aware of the stages reached by Jewish thought in the concept of immortality. Persian ideas had thoroughly permeated Judaism by Paul's time. There is eschatology enough in Paul's writings to thoroughly establish the fact of Persian influence upon Paul's mind.

Thus in Paul, east meets west. According to Deissmann: "In Paul there run side by side (native-Jewish) and western (Hellenistic-cosmopolitan)

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14. See Baillie, J. - And the Life Everlasting - pg.141.

expression of the hope."[15] There is a "power in resurrection" which can only be discerned through a world view. The figure of Paul is therefore of paramount importance in discovering it.

4. In contrast to this the independence of Paul stands out. While "I am debtor" expresses adequately one mood of Paul's; the other note, that of his insistence upon his own experience of revelation as his final authority, must not be missed. "I conferred not with flesh and blood".[16] So his dependence upon his world background must not be emphasized at the expense of this other mood.

This stands in contrast, too, to the other New Testament records. The best that we can say of the synoptic Gospels is that they represent a collection of early traditions about Jesus. Their foundation in experience is only remote. Of the fourth Gospel we can only say that a pious Ephesian did a splendid job of defending the superiority of Jesus in a Greek background. It is late, and contains more Greek philosophy than Christian history. But Paul writes from first hand. It is impossible to read Paul without catching - not the breadth of his reading nor the thoroughness of his collecting material concerning Jesus, but

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15. Deissmann, Paul, p. 218. The parentheses are Deissmann's.

16. Gal. 1:16. Galatians 1 and 2 are made up of Paul's insistence that he must be heard in his own right as an apostle of Jesus.

of the freshness and the reality of his experience of Jesus. To quote Bowen, from his discussion of the documents which testify of the resurrection: "First in rank, from every point of view, stand the letters of Paul. It is from him alone that we get any first-hand testimony; he tells us what he himself had experienced, as well as of the experience of men with whom he had personal acquaintance."[17]

So "the power of his resurrection" becomes a personal power, well grounded in experience.

5. Finally, having established the back-ground and the sincerity of Paul's message we turn now to the emphasis which Paul placed upon the fact of the resurrection.[18]

"Paul preached the resurrection from the beginning . . . . . In his preaching and his writing he became the most powerful and persistent exponent of the resurrection faith in the Christian Church. He was absolutely conscientious and terribly earnest. He preached with a conviction and a devotion which made his word a word of power."[19] Thus one

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17. Bowen, C.R.-The Resurrection in the N.T., pg.5.

18. Nothing is indicated here of the nature of Paul's resurrection experience. "Resurrection fact" is too often popularly associated with physical aspects.

19. Hayes, Doremus A. -The Resurrection Fact.pg.319-20.

writer describes the intensity with which Paul preached the resurrection of Jesus. A reading of Paul's life and letters bespeaks the truth of Dr. Hayes' picture.

There are but two accounts of the preaching of Paul during his missionary activities.[20] One presents Paul preaching to the Jews at Antioch of Pisidia. His approach was typically Jewish, sketching Israel's national history, culminating in Jesus, rejected by the Jews, but raised from the dead, no more to "return to corruption". The idea of "corruption" and "incorruption" will be studied later, but here it is plain that the crowning message on Paul's first tour is that of Jesus being "raised up".

The second is a different picture, but the same fact is revealed. This time Paul's preaching is to a Greek audience at Athens. The approach is through reference to traditional Greek piety and to Greek philosophy. It was when he came to his climax, declaring the resurrection of Jesus, that

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20. Acts 13:16-41, 17:22-31

the meeting broke up. It was central, even in Athens, where resurrection was foreign to the philosophers.

These accounts must not be taken too seriously, however. The author of the book of Acts cannot be credited with the accurate methods of modern history. When he recorded speeches of Paul, he himself made the speeches, there being no accurate written data available. They might well have been a record of what the author wished Paul to say on such occasions. But such a fact need not detract from our study. Surely the writer of "The Acts" represents early Christian thought, and the resurrection was included in it.

The earliest letter, to the Thessalonians, begins with a thanksgiving to God for the faithfulness of the Thessalonian church, it having turned many from idols and taught them to "wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come".[21]

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21. I Thess. 1:16.

In saluting the church in Galatia where it was important that the divine origin of his apostleship be well established Paul began, "Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)"[22]. This fact of the revelation of God through the resurrection of Jesus is an important Pauline conception but is outside the field of this study. It is only a step, however, to see that Paul's Christian experience dates from his assurance of having met the risen Christ somewhere on the road to Damascus. Resurrection, then, became the basis of Paul's religion.

Paul's Christology, too, has the resurrection of Jesus as one of its chief cornerstones. Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."[23] It was this resurrection experience that made Jesus Christ so powerful to Paul. Is not this another way of saying that the

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22. Galatians 1:1

23. Romans 1:4

resurrection of Jesus is the dynamic force of Paul's gospel?

Among the teachings of Paul none finds a stronger defense than his doctrine of resurrection. It should have first rank in importance along with Paul's great emphasis upon Christian liberty as contrasted with the rigidity of the Jewish law.[24] The fifteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians[25] is Paul's defense of the resurrection gospel. Most scholars speak of this epistle as being a rather loosely woven letter, dealing in turn with certain questions brought up by conditions in and inquiries from the Corinthian Church. The chapter on the resurrection, therefore, was occasioned by the doubts inherent in the Greek mind.

Schmiedel says that the whole conception of the resurrection was called in question by the Corinthians. Paul was forced to defend the entire gospel and go into detail concerning its foundation - the resurrection. Schmiedel calls attention to the logical order of the chapter, interspersed with the prepositions and conjunctions of the logician, i.e., such words as "now if", "but none", "else what", but

24. All of Galatians and a good share of the Book of Romans deals with this subject.

25. This statement sounds awkward but it is necessitated by the fact that most scholars agree that I Cr. is in reality Paul's second letter to the Corinthian church.

some will say", "now this I say", and finally, "wherefore be ye stedfast". In this he presents every possible argument to confute the deniers of the resurrection.[26]

Cave and Bowen have pointed out that it was the materialistic aspects of the belief in resurrection that troubled the Greeks.[27] We shall deal with the relationship of Paul's thought of resurrection to that of the Greeks later, but here it is clear that Paul is definitely determined to defend his gospel of the resurrection with the best of his power and logic.

We owe a debt to Barth here for his contribution to the centrality of Paul's resurrection gospel. Barth contends that the Corinthian letter, although dealing with disconnected subjects, is a decided unit. The first thirteen chapters Barth refers to thus: "Whoever read this Epistle must have been completely upset and shattered . . . . . must not this Epistle have had the effect of an earthquake, which would render any remaining ordered church life impossible?"[28]

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26. Schmiedel, P.W. - Article on Resurrection in Encyclopedia Biblica.

27. Cf. Cave, Sydney - The Gospel of St. Paul, pg.251, and Bowen, C.R. Resurrection in The New Testament, pg. 76.

28. The Resurrection of the Dead - pg. 99

His characterization here is largely true, for truly the epistle is negative, and sometimes harsh, in its approach.

Barth, however, does not think of chapter fifteen as an answer to a specific query, but as a dynamic defense of a positive Christian faith to follow the preceeding negative presentation. He says, "It cannot be by chance that I Cor.XV, the chapter which deals with the most positive subject that can be imagined, forms the very peak and crown of this essentially critical and polemically negative Epistle. What is disclosed here is Paul's key position. The Resurrection of the dead is the point from which Paul is speaking and to which he points".[29] Barth's argument there is not in accordance with modern scientific approaches to New Testament study. His presentation ~~here~~ is in the nature of attempted proof of a dogma at the expense of scientific inquiry. There is only a bit of worth, therefore, in what he has to say. Probably his greatest contributions lie in his emphases, not in his scholarship.

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29. The same, pg. 101. It may be that Barth uses his imagination here to the expense of his best scholastic judgment, but the point is well taken.

It is certainly true that the very truth of Christianity for Paul rested upon the actuality of the resurrection.[30] So the resurrection, whatever its meaning was for Paul, was central in all his work and teaching. Thus in discussing "The power of his resurrection" we are plumbing the very depths of Paul's religious experience.

6. In summary, then, we need only to reflect upon the place of Paul, as presented here, in a study of the resurrection of Jesus. It has been established that Paul actually knew more about the subject than any writer that has written upon the resurrection. He wrote from the vantage point of time. He wrote from the depth of experience. Whether his experience can be thought of as psychologically sound is beside the point here. The experience is the important thing and must be heeded if we are to gain any information from the man and his message. Paul wrote from a world background, adding a universal content to his teachings.

Paul's words are from his own hand. No case can be made out which will discount his conception of the resurrection on textual ground. We can thus

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30. I Cor. 15:13, 17-19.

depend upon what he said to the churches in Thessalonica, Corinth, Colossae, Galatea, Rome, and in Philippi as being convictions which he held, and which he desired that they too should hold.

And further, the fact that Paul, living thus close to the time of Jesus, in his world background, and through his own experience, considered this the very foundation of the Christian message, we cannot but say that Paul is the key man in our study of the reality of the resurrection experience.

Lastly, the very fact that Paul himself experienced "the power of his resurrection", leads us to follow him, his mind, and his background, to see if perchance we too, may find that "power".

CHAPTER III. Sources Of Paul's Knowledge of the Resurrection.

It has already been noted that Paul was a world citizen. Politically he was a Roman, culturally he was a Greek, and religiously he was a Jew. But this classification is too simple. The truth is that all of these elements were interwoven in the life of Paul. His political, social, and religious philosophy included all three elements.

To further complicate the background the movements of nations had done a thorough job of shuffling all the elements that made up the cultural life of the day. The Roman background was a composite one. In the Roman background we are led to wonder if we mean the official religion of the state or the popular religions represented in the mystery cults of the day. The Greek mind represented many phases. The anthropomorphisms of Homer and Hesiod were superseded by the highly spiritual conceptions of Plato and Aristotle in Paul's time, yet much of the ancient Greek religion remained. Both were integral parts of the Greek religious mind.

The Jewish mind illustrates an even more pronounced diversity. Probably the most involved study of the entire New Testament field concerns just this: What was the Jewish mind in the first century? It was much different from the Jewish nationalist

mind of most of the Old Testament, yet the conditions and circumstances of its change remain obscure. The Babylonian captivity of the Jews had its marked effect upon Judaism, the nation had been overrun by the Greeks, rank Jewish nationalism had again flared up for a time under the Maccabees. All these elements were strong in New Testament Palestine and had their effects upon the Jewish religious and social mentality. Further than this, the Jews had become important in the commerce of the world. Everywhere Paul went he found Jewish synagogues. Deissman says that in the Mediterranean basin, outside of Palestine there were more than one hundred and fifty Jewish congregations in the imperial period.[1] So the Jewish mind is not easy to determine, for it must be approached by some kind of a synthesis of all these elements.

Just how much Paul knew of the world in which he lived we do not know. For instance, do we know whether he had read the works of Plato and Aristotle, or whether he was well versed in the Avesta doctrines? The answer is that we do not. Furthermore we have no real proof that he was even well read in Jewish literature. His boastings are loud on this subject, but his writings do not prove it. His references to Jewish history are of a very sketchy type. He was certainly not a philosopher. I am inclined to

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1. Paul - pg. 86

think that he was not a great thinker. His work was of the practical sort. He was primarily a man of action, and his philosophy is implied in his recommendations to specific issues at stake. It is well to quote at length from Spencer here:

" Sauls whole temperament from the first was not that of a scholar, rabbinical or otherwise, but that of an itinerant philosopher[2] and reformer. Whatever learning he owned was taken, so to speak, out of the back door. The Athenians when he lectured before them called him a seedpicker, a dilettante, that is to say, and a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. His ability to quote very common tags from Greek poetry proves nothing. Any man who listened as Saul must have to endless talk in the market place, any man who heard the harangues of wandering cynic preachers or thumbed books in an open stall could do as much . . . . . for that matter, to judge from his letters, Saul was not even a good rabbinical scholar. His quotations from the Old Testament reveal no knowledge of the Hebrew text; they are based always on the Greek of the Septuagint.[3] . . . . His references to rabbinical teaching are of the simplest

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2. I would substitute the word "preacher" for "philosopher here.
3. Diessman lists this as one of Paul's strong emphases "To the end Paul remained a pious Bible-Jew, a Septuagint Jew". - Paul, pg. 99

kind.[4]

Are we thus negatively to conclude that the background had little effect upon Paul's religion? Such a conclusion would be unwarranted, even though it appears logical. There were too many strong beliefs current in the world to allow a man to travel incessantly throughout it without absorbing many of its basic philosophies. It would be absurd to speak of the new cult of the Christian church without having some knowledge of the cults already popularly patronized by the citizenry of the day. It would have been impossible to mingle with the reasoners at Athens without absorbing some of the wisdom of that great center of learning. Sitting at the feet of Gamaliel and moving in the high ranks of Pharisaism gave him much that was Jewish and much that was oriental. Contacts with the east were innumerable. Damascus itself is on the great eastern road. Whatever may be the significance of Paul's Arabian experience,[5] he certainly had ample opportunity for becoming versed in the folk-lore of the east.

Therefore, it is to the world background that we must now tern. We shall attempt to follow

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4. Beyond Damascus, Pg. 11. Spencer is not to be taken as a scholar in this field. I quote him here only as a matter of picturesqueness in expression.

5. There is no indication that this was a desert experience as popularly conceived. Cf. Gal. 1:17

the interwoven strands of the sources of this important doctrine. We shall study them, however, only insomuch as they must have influenced the thinking of Paul.

1. Let us turn first to the Orient. The dominant religious influence growing and influencing the Jewish mind from the east was that of the Parsi religion. The ancient Persian, Zarathustra, lived somewhere in the late seventh or early sixth century before the Christian era. His date is uncertain, and, to some, so is the fact of his historicity. He was the prophet of the great light-god, Ahura-Mazda. His religion waxed and waned at intervals. Except for such battles as Marathon and Salamis it would have become world wide. During this period the religion maintained its own priesthood, developed its scriptures, the Avesta, and prospered generally. Alexander the Greek conquered the Persians, destroyed the religious institutions, and burned books of the Avesta. A few sects arose to life from the ancient religion, notably Mithraism of the Roman period. The religion as a national institution came to supremacy again from 226-651 A.D. during the Sassanian period. It

was then destroyed by the Arabs and has been of little importance since. It is found today as the religion of approximately one hundred thousand Parsees in and around Bombay.

In all this history a good part of the Avestan scriptures have perished. Those that remain cannot be relied on for historical information. Some of them are late, some perhaps even dating as late as the early Sassanian period. Even in the earlier period many of the beliefs cannot be traced to Zarathustra himself. But out of his teachings and the cultural life of the day grew an elaborate philosophical system which had a tremendous influence upon the ancient world, and to the religious mind of the world.

The chief characteristic of the religion is that of dualism. Good and evil are forever in conflict. Ahura Mazda represented the good and Angra Mainyu the evil. Angels and demons attend each of these respectively and the whole pantheon becomes a warring host.

This dualism is carried over into the future life. Heaven and hell, as being separate places for the good and the bad have their origin in Persian belief. After death the soul of man lingers about the body, and on the fourth day it crosses the "Chinvat

Bridge". If the soul is pious it is escorted by a beautiful maiden to its resting place. "Through three steps the faithful soul passes into the Paradise of good thoughts, of good words, and of good deeds, and at the fourth step into the paradise of Endless Light, the House of Song, where Ahura Mazda, the holy angels and the pious dead dwell."[6] The impious soul was also met at the bridge, but his abode was the home of Angro Mainyu and his followers, the house of the Lie.

Eschatology was one of the leading Persian concepts. The coming of a saviour to bring the end of the present age and the beginning of the new was expected. The Persians placed the date at three thousand years after the death of Zarathustra. Then Saoshyant, the savior, will appear and "Let Angru Mainyu, the Evil Spirit, be hid beneath the earth; let the daevas disappear; let the dead arise, and let bodily life be sustained in these now lifeless bodies".[7] In the later Avestas there is much concerning the nature of resurrection.[8]

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6. Carter, G. W., Zoroastrianism and Judiasm, pg.97

7. A quotation from an Avestan fragment in Mills, L. H., Avesta Eschatology.

8. See Avesta Eschatology, pp. 42-3.

How much of this philosophy was prevalent in the mind of Paul is, of course, our only concern here. There is no way of knowing how much of the philosophy in Judaism which resembles Parsee religion had a Persian origin. Such philosophy could have arisen in the Jewish nation itself. Baillie thinks thus when he says,"The best opinion seems to be more and more pointing to an independent origin of these doctrines among the Jews themselves. It is difficult to escape the impression that they are the natural outgrowth of the prophetic teaching".[9]

That there are similarities cannot be denied, but the question regarding which borrowed from the other need not be pursued. Persia and Judah were thrown together and never entirely separated at the exile. This gave them a common culture and both borrowed and contributed to each other's religious development. There is no question but what post-exilic Judaism was much different from pre-exilic. The Judaism of the New Testament represents post-exilic and we have inherited it in

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9. Baillie, John, "And the Life Everlasting", p. 155. There are others, however, who think the opposite is true. For instance, Dr. C. C. McCown.

our modern day. Thus the Babylonian captivity takes on tremendous significance in the history of the western world.

Among the doctrines that can be ascribed to Persian origin seems to be that of the resurrection. Baillie quotes from archbishop Soderblom regarding this; "Jewish eschatology took over from Zoroastrianism only some insignificant details, and certainly not its original inspiration. There is only one capital point where Judaism may have been subjected to a certain influence through contact with Zoroastrianism, namely its idea of resurrection."[10]

Just what the history of this doctrine is among the Jews cannot be determined. It is a post-exilic doctrine and most of its history is tied up in the obscure intertestament period. The doctrine of the resurrection seems to crop out almost full-blown in the New Testament period with little chance of tracing its history. Dr. Montefiore, a Jewish scholar says, "this hope (immortality) arose in Israel in the period of the 'blank leaf' between the Old Testament and New. By A.D. 20 it had already become an accepted dogma of the Pharisaic and Rabbinic synagogue".[11]

Furthermore it must have closely resembled

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10. The same, p. 156.

11. Hibbert Journal Vol. XXX, p. 568.

the Persian beliefs. The Jewish belief surely was influenced greatly by the Persian's even if we grant that the Jews may not have borrowed it outright. The two Jewish sects, the Pharisees and the Sadducees bring a bit of light upon this concept. When Paul, being heard before the Jewish council in Jerusalem, mentioned the resurrection immediate division was the result. "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both."[12] The resurrection, together with angels and spirits, sounds Persian.[13]

The Pharisees at least held a philosophy common to the Persians. Paul, then, "A pharisee, a son of Pharisees"[14] inherited the doctrine of the resurrection in its eastern form.[15]

The east then, makes a contribution to the conception of the Pauline meaning of the resurrection.

2. It was no doubt to Jewish conceptionS that Paul owed the greatest share of his own thought.

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12. Acts 23:8 Cf. Mt. 22:23, Mk. 12:18

13. The Sadducee attitude is probably Greek in origin, indicating that both Greek and Persian ideas were bidding for supremacy during this obscure period.

14. Acts 23:6. This phrase "son of Pharisees" need not be construed to mean that his ancestors were Pharisees. In this case it probably means that touching the resurrection he was thoroughly in accord with Pharisaism.

15. There is evidence of Parsi philosophy in such verses as Rom. 8:38-9, Col. 1;16, Col. 2:15, and in his eschatology. But it need not be dealt with in detail here.

We need not spend time to prove that Jewish thought influenced Paul greatly. We need only concern ourselves with the conception of resurrection that was held by the Judaistic religion.

It is not possible to speak definitely even here. We have seen in connection with the Persian influence upon Paul's thought that the line of demarcation between Persian and Jewish is not at all clear. However, it is quite possible to trace trends in Hebraic though which throw light upon the Pauline concept.

Paul, as a Jew, represented mature Jewish thought. There was no rising Jewish nation in his day, with all the strong religious fervor and beliefs which such a process evokes. Thus that which may be called Jewish must be a study of Jewish origins and development of the doctrine of the resurrection.

The Hebrews, as did every ancient people, began with a belief in a kind of immortality of the soul.[16] The Jewish "Sheol", appearing very early in Biblical history, points to a belief in life after death. This Sheol was simply the abode of the spirits of those who had died, and nowhere in Jewish traditions is there offered a clear description of the place. Souls in Sheol simply remained in a gloomy state, as Alger picturesquely states,

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16. Note the opening sentence by Addison in his Life Beyond Death: "The belief that the soul of man survives his death is so nearly universal that we have no reliable record of a tribe or nation or religion in which it does not prevail." Cf. also Frazer's studies in The Golden Bough

quoting from Milton:

"No light, but rather darkness visible".[17]

The earliest Isaiah spoke of Sheol dramatically when he sang the satire upon the king of Babylon:

"Sheol beneath is thrilled to greet your coming;
She stirs up for you the shades".[18]

"As for my hope, who shall see it?
It shall go down into Sheol, when
once there is rest in the dust."
(Job. 17 15,16)

"Are not my days few? Cease then
and let me alone that I may take
comfort a little
Before I go whence I shall not return,
Even to the land of darkness and
the shadow of death;
The land darkens midnight . . . . .
. . .without any order."
(Job. 10 21-22

"Sheol hath enlarged its desire and
opened its mouth without measure;
and their glory, and their multi-
tude, and their pomp, and he that
rejoiceth among them descend
into it."
(Is. 5 14)

There is no consistent proof that the Hebrews, at the period of their national religion ever rose above this gloomy aspect of the future

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17. Alger, W. R., A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life, P. 154

18. Is. 14:9, Translated by A. R. Gordon.

life.[19]

The emphasis of the early Jewish writers was upon the present life. Death was a calamity, long life was the greatest blessing of Yahweh. The prophets had little to say concerning life after death.

There was in the prophetic movement in Israel an important transition period, however. The shade, or ghost, belief represented the survivals of primitive animism and had no appeal to such men of affairs and preachers of ethics as were the Hebrew prophets. So none of it occupies the mind of the prophet. Baillie says, "We can thus trace in the history of Israelite religion a provisional stage in which the animistic belief in ghosts is being zealously opposed and in which the belief in the soul's eternal life with God has not yet emerged. It looks as if it could not have emerged until the other had gone".[20]

The breakdown of the ancient Semitic animism with its inherent belief in "life's ghostly aftermath" through the prophetic teaching was probably most responsible for the negative view

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19. Some scholars find evidence of a belief in positive immortality in some of the Psalms and Job, but it is not convincing. Also the Psalms and Job belong to a late period of Judaism.

20. And the Life Everlasting, p. 142-3

of life after death found throughout the Old Testament, and for such writing as that of Koheleth.[21]

The Sadducees of Jesus' day represent a group that still denied any form of resurrection. It need not be thought that they denied everything pertaining to immortality, but it is certain that the after life had a small place in their belief. Josephus made the simple observation, "But the doctrine of the Sadducees is this, that the souls die with the bodies".[22] The Saducees were few, but probably an influential group. Their non-belief in the resurrection represents the collapsed ancient system without the addition of later religious philosophies. The Sadducees had lost their old beliefs, and had added neither the physical resurrection belief of the Persians, nor the spiritual belief in immortality of the Greeks.

This dissolution of the ancient belief in ghosts represented only one side of the development of Hebrew thought concerning resurrection. There is another side which is quite as Jewish and certainly

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21. Ecclesiastes 3:19-21. This represents an influx of Greek philosophy, but nevertheless is based upon the negative belief in immortality.

22. Antiquities of the Jews, Book XVIII, I, 4.

leads more directly to the Pauline concept.

The greater mass of the Jews were not satisfied to simply ignore theidea of the future life. Thus after the "provisional stage" already referred to in Hebrew history some positive forms of resurrection belief began to appear, Some were taken from the Greeks, some from the Persians, and some were no doubt primarily Jewish religious developments. Most of its history lies in the intertestament period and thus is hard to trace.[23] But there are hints of the origin of a resurrection doctrine in Jewish literature.

Bernard traces three stages of development of the doctrine of resurrection among the Jews.[24] The first stage took the form of faith in the restoration of the nation. There was nothing individual about this early faith; it was concerned only with the glorification of Zion, even in the face of the decline and fall of the kingdom of Israel. This faith became a dogma in Jewish tradition and later editors added sections pointing to the restoration of Israel to writings that were not so intended.[25]

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23. See Above, p. 32

24. Article on Resurrection in Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible.

25. Note Amos 9:9-15. This is also the chief note of many of the Psalms.

So great was the Jewish faith.

The second stage was a belief in individual and national resurrection side by side. The interest was still in the restoration of Israel, but individual resurrection was of necessity an integral part of such a restoration. Thus:

> "Thy dead shall live
> My dead bodies shall arise."[26]

Ezekiel dramatized this evolutionary stage in his graphic picture of the valley of the dry bones.[27] He could think of no way which such a wasted nation as Israel could be restored except for each of the dry bones to arise and take on flesh and again let the breath of Yahweh bring new life to the individuals and thus to the nation.[28]

The third step in the development of the Jewish idea of resurrection is the fact that in later Judaism resurrection of the individual stands alone. Thus by the time of the apocalypse of Daniel[29] it could be written, "And many of them that sleep in the

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26. Is. 26:19. The fact that this is included in the apocalyptic section of I Isaiah has no bearing on this issue except that it fixes a late date.

27. Ezekiel 37:1-14.

28. Note also Hosea 6:2

29. C. 150 B. C.

dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."[30] Persian influence seems obvious here, but we need not be certain of it. Having traced stages in the development of Hebrew thought thus far, such a doctrine of individual resurrection is the next logical step. Thus it could be a conception developed parallel to, rather than from Persian doctrine.

The writer of the second book of Maccabees made much of the "power of the resurrection".[31] A widow and her seven sons were tortured and killed one by one because of their refusal to eat swine's flesh. Each died with something like this upon his lips, "It is good to die at the hands of men and look for the hopes which are given by God, that we shall be raised up again by him."[32]

This zeal for strict observance of Jewish tradition was the cornerstone of the Pharisaic sect among the Jews. Something of this pious hope of resurrection came into their religious belief. The Pharisees had their origin during the rise of Jewish

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30. Dan. 12:2. The importance of apocalypticism in this study of sources will be dealt with later.

31. The date of this book is uncertain but it represented a type of Hebrew thought in the first century A. D.

32. II Maccabees 7:14

nationalism during the Maccabean revolts and the sect was kept alive by such a hatred for non-Jewish nations and hope in the salvation of Israel as is reflected in II Maceabees and the apocalyptic books.

Josephus says of them, "They believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again."[33]

The Pharisees, then, were a product of a long evolutionary process in the unfolding of Hebrew belief. It is no wonder that they were in such conflict with the Sadducees. They represented two widely differing traditions.

There is no question as to which tradition Paul followed. When Paul wrote to the Corinthian church defending the doctrine of the resurrection to non-Jewish people, he had ample material in his Pharisaic traditions from which to write. Further, he spoke as only a Pharisee could speak.When he wrote from his prison cell some of the Pharisaic hope in the resurrection flared up; thus while facing death he could spek of its power.

As Kennedy says, "St. Paul, indeed, as a Pharisee, was perfectly familiar with the idea of resurrection."[34] There is no question about this.

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33. Antiquities, XVIII, I, 3

34. St. Paul's Conception of the Last Things, p. 220

3. An important phase of the study of the background of Paul's attitudes concerning the resurrection lies in the eschatological concepts of his period.[35]

"The Jews earnestly looked for a resurrection of the dead as an accompaniment of the Messiah's coming".[36]

It was Martha of Bethany who said to Jesus concerning the proposed resuscitation of her brother Lazarus: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."[37] Bernard says that this represented a typical Jewish attitude toward the resurrection in Jesus' day.[38] "The last day" held an important place in Jewish thought.

It is not necessary here to trace the rise of apocalypticism in Israel. But it brought about a great emphasis upon the resurrection which is important to our study. We have seen the Jewish roots of apocalypticism in our study of the Judaistic background of Paul's teaching. The Jews looked for the restoration ofIsrael. We saw this longing grow into a faith, and the faith grow into a dogma. But this was not the end. The Jewish faith was too virile to leave it at the dogmatic stage. The conviction grew inthe fertile imaginations of the Jews and in their

35. Much of this section could well have been included in the study ofJewish beliefs, but for clarity I have included it in a separate section. Eschatology goes beyond Judaism. It strikes a universal note.

36. Alger, W. R., Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life, p. 170

37. Jn. 11:24. Diessmann insists that the fourth Gospel continues and enlarges the doctrines of Paul If this be true the discussion in this chapter is doubly important.

38. Article on Resurrection - HDB

rich religious fervor, and the Jew dramatized it. It grew into the great drama of the "day of Yahweh". Sometimes the day was a glorious victorious day[39], and again it was a day of wrathful judgment.[40] But whichever form it took it was conceived in great realism and the apocalyptic books stand today as perhaps the greatest creation of the imaginative mind.[41]

Whichever form it took it almost demanded a belief in resurrection. It was difficult to conceive of the great drama of the end of the age withoutthe present ages figuring in it. So the dry bones of scattered and wasted Israelbegan to take form and flesh and inthe resurrection became partakers in the final glorious day, or were brought up for final judgment. This latter fact accounts for the great emphasis upon judgment in Christian literature. It too had its origin in Jewish apocalypticism.

Another idea at the heart of apocalypticism was the idea of the golden age. Even the prophets were strong

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39. See Joel, Daniel, Enoch, and all of the extra-canonical apocalyptic writings.

40. This is the emphasis in Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and is the attitude of the prophetic movement as a whole.

41. Dante and Milton both must take second place to the best apocalyptic writers in point ofdramatic realism.

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in their proclamation of the new age to come.[42] Although the present Jewish nation was going to pieces in the movements of history, the pious Jew never ceased to sing of the glories of the future. The coming of the Messiah was to bring

"Peace on earth to men of goodwill".

The Garden of Eden once more would return and prosperity for the righteous Jew would be assured.

But what of those that were gone? Were they to miss the glories of the future? The drama of the last day was to solve this question too. Divine intervention would raise with the blast of the trumpet even the dead. Thus it was well known that "he should rise again in the resurrection in the last day."

Dr. McCown found the idea of bodily resurrection bound up in two leading Jewish concepts, namely that of individual moral responsibility, and that of the future "superlative power and prosperity of God's people". "The synthesis of these two ideas", he says, "was found in the doctrine of the bodily resurrection, which made it possible for the righteous Israelite to come back to earth to enjoy the delights of the messianic kingdom, while the wicked languished in Sheol, now become a place of punishment and frequently called Gehenna."[43] Dr. McCown considers this belief in the resurrection of the

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42. Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-4; Is. 41:18; Ez. 47:1-12, etc.

43. McCown, C. C., The Promise of His Coming, p. 129

individual to be one of the most important contributions of Jewish apocalypticism.[44]

It may well be asked -- what of all this and St. Paul? For that, of course, is our only concern here. Is there any important connection between Jewish apocalypticism and Paul's doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus?

It would suffice for some to simply make mention of the fact that eschatological thought was common in Paul's day. He could not possibly have escaped it. Jewish Pharisaism was saturated with it. It was prevalent in the early church.[45]

To say that Paul was eschatological in his preaching is a mistake. The emphasis would be wrong. Diessmann is right when he remarks that "Paul had no 'ethics' and no 'eschatology'".[46] By this he meant that we cannot trace a consistent ethical system in Paul's thought, and the same is true in his eschatology. There is much eschatology in his writings, but it is not consistent.

In his doctrine of the resurrection Paul sometimes tends toward the idea of the Jewish Parousia when he conceives of a sudden mass resurrection at the coming of the Heavenly King.

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44. Same, P. 128

45. The eschatological emphases in the synoptic gospels is a case in point here.

46. Paul, p 207

"We all shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed".[47] But again he turns to a spiritual, more Greek conception

"For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."[48]

Paul's eschatology does not always appear consistent, but he certainly was familiar with the language of the apocalyptists and he employed it oftentimes. His faith as to the future was thoroughly laden with apocalyptic concepts. The place of Jesus in the future is conceived in terms of his messianic mission.[49]

It was the resurrection and ascension of Jesus that proved his messiahship to Paul.[50] It could well be, then, that herein lay part of the "power of his resurrection" as far as Paul was concerned. He was convinced by the resurrection experience that Jesus was the all-powerful,

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47. I Cor. 15:51,52

48. II Cor. 5:1

49. See McCown, The Promise of His Coming, pp. 174-5 for an outline of Paul's doctrine of the future.

50. Romans 1:4

coming Prince of the world, and that being triumphant over death, he would be able to come and conquer the world.

But we must not lay too much stress on this element in Paul's belief in the resurrection. It cannot be proved that Paul wished the literal belief in the pictures which he presented. In fact, one of the great problems in all study of apocalyptic literature is the task of determining what part of it is meant to be taken literally and what part is symbolic. The Jewish mind did not donsider it necessary to make such distinction. The nature of their thought here has led succeeding generations into endless confusion. Headlam thinks that Paul's use of eschatological phrases is a symbolic use,[51] and that the apocalyptic background of Paul's teaching merely supplied him with language and imagery. Cave also comes to Paul's defense when he says, "Much of the inconsistency here is due to his attempt to express the new facts of Christianity in terms which belonged to the alien world ofJewish apocalypse".[52]

Then it can be said that Paul with the dynamic belief that he held in the resurrection of Jesus, used apocalyptic language to express it. It may be that the very virility of his message led him to the use of that

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51. Headlam, A.C., St. Paul and Christianity, Chapt. II

52. Cave, Sidney, The Gospel of St. Paul, p. 237

vocabulary.[53]

Kennedy, on the other hand, holds that Paul has made a remarkable contribution to the development of the idea of resurrection by holding fast to the dynamic and dramatic aspects of the apocalyptic idea, but giving it a spiritual content from Greek and other sources.[54]

So the "power of his resurrection" became enriched through the far-reaching influence of the current eschatology and its re-interpretation at the hands of Paul.

4. The contribution of the Greeks to the cultural world is well known. Paul spent his early years in the Greek city of Tarsus. He moved in a Greek world. Only in later years did he move as far as Rome. The civilization of his Mediterranean world was Greek.

In discussing this background to Paul's belief we again find ourselves exploring an uncertain field. It is next to impossible to say what was distinctly Greek in Paul's day. Greek was a composite title given to all the eastern Mediterranean world. It had long since expanded beyond the Aegean. In the preceding sections we have literally been extracting sections from the "Greek" world. For in Persia and in Palestine Greek was the dominant culture.

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53. If this view be held it must cover a multitude of references, but it can be consistently held that there is little literal eschatology in Paul's writing.

54. Kennedy, H.A.A., St. Paul's Conception of the Last Things, pp. 227 ff.

So here we turn to a larger background. But it is not necessarily of greater importance. The Jew could be thoroughly a Jew in an overwhelmingly Greek world, as the thriving of the Pharisaic sect amply proves. Thus it is not necessary to jump at the most obvious conclusion, that Paul's teachings come largely from a Greek background.

The Greek influence on Paul may not have been great. Headlam is worth quoting here: "The relations of St. Paul to the Greek or Roman life of his times were only superficial. An able man such as he was, with a keenness of sympathy and vividness of insight, travelling through the world of his day, mixing with many classes of persons, could not but be affected by what he saw and heard, and sothe life of the times, its political ideas, its games, its philosophy, its poetry, all found echoes in his writings. But the influence was not fundamental. It supplied him with language and imagery, but did not mould his thought. His ideas are expressed in Hebrew and not in Greek categories."[55,56]

The Greek influence upon Paul's doctrine must not be thus finally minimized. It cannot be doubted that, throughPaul's great travels and his meeting of many people and circumstances that he absorbed much that was distinctly Greek -- as opposed to his inheritance and education which was Jewish. Spencer says graphically, "Such

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55. St. Paul and Christianity, p. 16

56. There is an interesting, and informative book by Derwacter, F.M., Preparing the Way for Paul, which emphasizes the importance of the proselyting missionary activity of the Jewish church. Thus Paul's movements could have been confined almost entirely to the Jewish communities.

terminology as Paul possessed was in the air of the period and could come to the little Jew by the simply process of osmosis."[57] We are interested in what came into Paul's thinking through this process. And we are still more interested in its effects upon Paul's doctrine of the resurrection.

Just what can be termed Greek religious belief is an elusive thing. The Greek religious development was not parallel to that that we have been studying. There were no saints among the Greeks. There were merely philosophers and literary men. There is nothing in Greek parallel to the Zend-Avesta of Persia or the Torah of the Jews. There was no canon of scripture. Worship was even multiform. If in Paul's day Greece was hard to define geographically, it was equally difficult to define culturally and religiously. The Greek mind of the first century was indeed a composite. The best we can do is to point to certain trends within Greek religious belief which will bear upon the subject in hand.

By the first century A. D. Greek religion had already bloomed and grown more or less decadent. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle had lived and died three and a half centuries earlier. Zeno and Epicureus had established their systems of thought long since. In Paul's time Athens, which had once been the seat of learning, where men with forceful oratory had proclaimed philosophies of the state and of the soul, had languished to a place where men gathered to idle away the hours and perhaps

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57. Beyond Damascus, p. 11.

pick up an argument on religion or politics. The heyday of religious philosophy and ferver was gone.

Thus when Paul preached religion to them they were a none too enthusiastic audience, and when he came to such a profound conception as that of the resurrection it was too much. The idea evidently was not new to them, or the meeting would likely have been a success. But, the idea of the resurrection had likely been thrashed over in their arguments and the subject was threadbare, and to them found wanting. There was no eschatological background in Greek literature to develop a sense of the resurrection.

As a matter of fact, the Greek period at the time of Paul represented, much as the negative trend in Judaism, a low point in the Greek view of life after death. The Greek mind is reflected more in Judaism by Koheleth than in any other writer. The Greek didn't care a whole lot about immortality, and he was weary of arguing the point.*

The unmoral anthropomorphic ancient Olympic gods had been destroyed by the enlightened teachings of the great philosophers. Stoicism and Epicureanism had substituted preoccupation of the mind with affairs of the present life, -- one through duty and the other through pleasure -- for speculation upon the future state. The high spiritual interpretation of the soul and God put forth by the three greatest of Greeks not being shared

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58. Acts 17:21

*. Note that this is true only of the ancient Greek religion. It is not to be confused with the mystery religions. See below.

by the average Greek mind, the study of Greek concepts of immortality and resurrection is more or less of a blank. It is no wonder that Paul was forced to defend his doctrine of resurrection to the Corinthian church! It is no wonder that he couched his presentation of the resurrection in the best logic he could muster, and in the most figurative language he could summon. For the whole conception of resurrection as Paul saw it was foreign to the Greek mind.

But on the positive side it can be said that Paul did seem to grasp something of the spiritual side of the Greek religion. Greek religion, even in Paul's day had something definite to contribute. It could not grasp the idea of the resurrection of the body, but in rejecting that phase it paved the way for the building of a spiritual interpretation of the resurrection experience which is the great possession of the Christian church today. Without the influx of Greek thought, negative though it may have been, the doctrine of the resurrection would soon have lost itself in gross imagination and would have been left floundering on the physical plane. I doubt if any scholar will deny the importance of Greek influence at this point.

There is a great contrast between the sound of the trumpet of the Parusia in I Corinthians 15 and these words of Paul in his final correspondence

with the Corinthian church:

"For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven".[59]

This latter touch is thoroughly Greek, and it is a valuable addition to the concept. But yet, would it not have been just more idle talk for the Athenian market place without the dynamic Jewish imagery supplied elsewhere by the apostle? The power of the resurrection requires both elements.

There is another important stage in the concept of resurrection reached by the fusion of Jew and Greek. This lies in the nature of the resurrection body. The Jewish thought of the resurrection body has already been examined. In many respects it was a crude concept, and the physical body was important. In fact, the Jews could not quite separate life from the body in their thought. But not so the Greek.

The Greeks had little difficulty in separating the soul and the physical body. The thought was inherent in the Greek language. Or probably more nearly correct, the language grew to express the thought. "Life" and "soul" were closely associated. The same word (ψυχή) could be

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59. II Cor. 5:1,2

used to mean both. It meant the life apart from the body (σῶμα). There was also a popular belief, probably of Orphic origin, that the physical body was not at all important. It only existed to house the body. The soul freed from the body was preferable. Moore speaks of Plato's Cratylus wherein Socrates is made to go into a discussion of the origin of the words ψυχή and σῶμα .

"He says that he imagines that those who first gave the soul its name ψυχή , wished to express the truth that the soul when in the body is the source of life, and gives the body the ability to breathe and revive, and that when this power fails the body, then it perishes and dies."[60] This is, of course, a word play and expresses a popular explanation of origin rather than a scientific one. Socrates also played similarly with the word σῶμα , offering the explanation that it was similar to σῆμα , a token, or sign - the popular term for a tomb. Thus the concept of the body as being something of a prison for the soul became well rooted in Greek philosophy.

This is an important point in our discussion

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60. Moore, C.H., The Religious Thought of the Greeks P. 160

here, for it represents a very definite clash between Jewish and Greek ideas. Paul stood between the two. The Corinthian church could not accept the fact of a physical resurrection, for the resuscitation of the body was even abhorrent to them. Paul also certainly did not hold the grosser materialistic beliefs of the Jews. And yet Paul was forced to defend the resurrection gospel to those who did not believe in it at all. It is good to quote from Cave here. "A belief in such a resurrection body was contrary not only to the skepticism, but to the religious idealism of the Greeks. Such a belief would seem to them both crude and materialistic, and, as bringing the soul again into the bondage of the earthly body; would contradict their craving for redemption from the flesh. But this belief did not express Paul's view. He too held that 'corruption cannot inherit incorruption'. The resurrection body which he proclaimed was not the human flesh reanimated, but a body of a spiritual kind; and much of the obscurity of this chapter (1 Cor. 15) is due to this, that he was fighting on a double front, at once protesting against the cruder Jewish view and opposing the view of those who denied the resurrection altogether."[61]

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61. The Gospel of St. Paul, p. 251.

There is something in Paul's use of the word ἀφθαρσία , incorruption, which holds both the Jewish and Greek ideas. The body is to be raised, but it is a different sort of body, an immortal, incorruptible one.[62] It carries the spiritual content of the highest Greek concept of immortality and the personal force of the Jewish resurrection. Thus resurrection takes on more "power".

Important to our study here is a short sketch of the influence of the mystery religions of Paul's day. They were an integral part of the Greek world, and were probably more important religiously than traditional Greek religions. At least their importance in Greek popular religion must not be discounted.

Baillie speaks of the rise of Dionysiac worship, the basis of many of the mystery cults, as being parallel to the prophetic and apocalyptic movements in Israel.[63] Interesting too, to the study, is the fact that they arose principly around concepts of life after death. There was no enthusiasm displayed in the old Greek religious belief of life forever in the shades. There was

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62. Cf. Wisdom of Solomon 2:23, 6:19. This book represents Greek ideas incorporated by a Jewish writer.

63. And the Life Everlasting, P. 142

likewise no chance for growth of the idea of immortality so long as such a gloomy system of thought prevailed. It is only natural that some revolted. In the seventh century B.C. the oldest mystery religion, the Eleusinian, was founded. Its origin is obscure, as are its doctrines and rituals. But it was founded upon the worship of Demeter, Mother earth, the goddess of the underworld. Through entering into secret alliance with this goddess assurance could come of a happier existence in the world below.

An advance upon this was made with the coming from Thrace of the Dionysiac worship. Rohde says that "the worship of Dionysus must have sown the first seed of belief in the immortal life of the soul."[64] Baillie gives a picturesque description of the appeal of the Dionysiac worship to the Greek mind. The Greek, of course, felt that there was no connection of immortality with mortal man. That gift was reserved for the gods. Baillie says "But now from the mountains of Thrace there comes the remarkable rumor that a method has after

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64. Psyche, p. 255

all been found by which the gulf may be bridged - a new kind of relationship by which man may be 'possessed of God', God 'entering into man' until he becomes ἐν θέος , he in God and God in him."[65] Thus, through the ceremonies involved immortality could be reached. It is impossible to estimate the force with which such a belief, must have struck the minds of many of the Greeks. It was tonic to souls that had been weighted down with the gloom of Hades. It was like the wine that was used in the Dionysiac rites. It also brought an eschatalogical outlook to Greek religion.

The similarities to Paul's mystical beliefs are obvious here. Paul's mystical feeling that "Christ liveth in me" was central in his religious belief. To say that Paul was influenced by the Dionysiac mystery is, however, absurd. It would be more reasonable to conclude that in Dionysiac religion there is a parallel to Paul's mysticism. Indeed there are parallels to mystic Christianity in all mystery religions.

The Orphic religion, which by the time of Paul was probably the most important of Greek religions, had much in common with the Dionysiac

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65. And the Life Everlasting, p. 126

worship. In fact, it had largely absorbed it. Orphism, of very obscure, but of ancient origin, had largely conquered Greece much as Christianity later was to "conquer" the Roman empire. It conquered by the process of syncretism. Christianity gained the day by incorporating many of the pagan philosophies and ideas. So Orphism was very much the popular religion of the Greek world by the time of the Roman period.[66] It never had the status of a state religion, and its cults were on the most part local brotherhoods. But with the ecstatic rites of initiation and emphasis upon frenzy and emotional display it presented such a contrast, even relief, to the traditional morbid and gloomy Greek system that it soon appealed to a popular spirit.

Orphism presents us with a clear picture of life beyond, still none too inspiring. It is the familiar picture of Hades, into which the dead enter by crossing a river by boat. Judgment follows

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66. An interesting study of the growth, rise and importance of Orphism is afforded in Macchioro, V.D., From Orpheus to Paul. Macchioro believes that the conquest of Greece by the Orphic type of religion was one of the important factors in preparing the way for Christianity. Is there no end to these "preparations for Christianity?"

and the evil go through fire into the land of Tartarus, and the good find their way to Elysian fields. There is an oriental touch here which can readily be seen.

The Orphic initiate was supposed to gain in life the same release of the soul from body which ordinarily came with death. For it was release from the body that was mostly desired.

This is the most important point in our discussion here, and indeed it lends a great deal of enlightenment to an understanding of Paul's insistence upon the resurrection doctrine. This dualism was an essential feature of Greek religion in whatever form it was cast. To make this more clear, let us quote from Macchioro: "From this prison (the body), souls can finally escape through death, the only perfect catharsis, the unique, complete deliverance of the soul from its bodily burden. But this deliverance, to speak properly, can be assured only by the destruction of the body. While the body exists there is a possibility that the soul may again enter its former prison. Hence the necessity, not only of death but also of a funeral rite which involves

the annihilation of the body."[67]

Time need not be spent here to discuss the question as to how much all this Greek thought affected the religion of Paul. That is not the question. For Paul perhaps did not inherit so much from Greek religious belief. He was too much of a Jew for that. But the point of importance is that in any first century concept of resurrection which was to be world wide, such a concept in its propogation must inevitably meet this Greek mind. It was part of the first century culture to which Christianity was addressed.

May we, then, name the points at which this conception had most to do with the Christian belief? There are at least three definite points that are significant.

First, the Greek was prepared for a doctrine of the after life. The gloomy aspect of the shades and soul-less existence in Hades after death had ceased to interest anyone of importance. The idea of immortality being reserved for the gods alone had failed to satisfy. Hence the rise of the popular mystery religions with a fresh and almost

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67. From Orpheus to Paul, p. 118.

glowing emphasis upon the future life. Dr. Moore, in speaking of the mystery religions says, "We have seen how a new religious sense arose which turned men's thoughts toward the next world and future happiness."[68]

Second, the evil nature of the physical body lies in the background. This is where friction between Paul and Greece became real. Annihilation of the body was most desirable to the Greek and any resurrection of the physical body denied the highest in Greek religious thought. It is not hard to see why many questions would arise in the Corinthian church concerning such a doctrine.

And third, the highly spiritual interpretation of immortality is important. The Greek thought held great place for the spiritual, much more than the Jewish. Everything pertaining to permanence and ultimate reality was conceived in spiritual terms.

This analysis must not be left without its synthesis. There is no question but what Paul

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68. Religious Thought of the Greeks, p. 73

was dualistic in his thought. The flesh, with its lusts, to him was evil, and release from the "old man" of sin was earnestly desired. We groan in this body, longing for the heavenly.[69] Baptism became an initiation rite by which the old fleshly nature was shaken off and the spiritual nature born.

"We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we might also walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be done away, that so we should be no longer in bondage to sin".[70]

There is abundant parallelism here to Greek thought and the mystery religions. Here is the very communion with the death and resurrection of Christ. Here is the setting free of the spirit from the "prison house of sin". Paul had probably not studied the doctrines of Orphism and the

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69. II. Cor. 5:1ff., Cf I Cor. 15:44 ff.

70. Rom. 6:4-6

philosophies of Plato, but he certainly struck a universal note which was "in the air" of the first century.

Is it too far-fetched, then, to say that Paul took up this highly spiritualized concept of immortality that was so representative of the Greek mind, and added to it the dynamic realism of the Jewish and apocalyptic idea of the resurrection? I think not. He clothed the concept in terms of realism. For him, the trumpet was to sound and "the dead shall be raised - in the twinkling of an eye."[71] It is the Jewish realism - imagery - which has made the Jewish and apocalyptic literature so great, added to the vagueness of the Greek thought. "Communion with the death and resurrection of Christ is for him (Paul) not an allegory of a spiritual change, but an objective truth, a real death and resurrection", says Macchioro.[72] This difference is important. It places the stamp of reality upon the spiritual experience. Herein lies one of Paul's great contributions to Christian thought.

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71. I Cor. 15:52

72. From Orpheus to Paul, p. 196

5. To speak of the Roman background to Paul's thought need take but little time. Rome's influence in Paul's time was much more geographic than cultural. Paul preached as a Roman citizen, but to a Hellenistic world. Even Rome was conquered by Greece culturally. Moore says, "In truth the conquest of Greece over Rome was complete; in literature, art, philosophy, and religion captured Greece had taken her captor captive; by the beginning of our era Greek thought had penetrated to all the great centers of the Roman Empire".[73] The ancient Roman gods had not gone without a struggle and in the wake of the conquest there lay much religious agnosticism, but as a whole what has been said for Greece can largely be repeated for Rome.

Stoicism and Epicureanism were the important Roman philosophies. We have seen both to be unfavorable to a dynamic resurrection gospel. The mystery religions held sway among the populace in a highly developed cult form. Among these were the Pythagorean mysteries, which eventually became the successor to Greek Orphism, the Cybele-Attis cults, Isis-Serapis worship from Egypt, the Hermetic

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73. Religious Thought of the Greeks, p. 245

mysteries, and Mithraic worship. The latter, with its oriental flavor was distinctly Roman. The Greeks would never have introduced anything coming from their Persian enemies. Their thought, then, held room for the mystery experience which was in Paul's doctrine of resurrection.

They had gone through many successive stages of belief in life after death, so the Roman world was prepared thus for the advent of Paul's teaching. In fact the thought of actual life after death was more highly developed in pagan Rome than in Greece.[74] Their thought was, however, that of survival of the body with its repose in the tomb, in infernal regions, or in heaven, rather, than any thought of definite resurrection. The Roman epitaph "Hic requiescit" (Here rests) was the counterpart of the Christian "He is not here, he is risen". It is an odd testimony to Christian faith that the Roman formula still remains the popular one among Christians. The difference again is one of force. Paul in meeting the Roman world, struck a new note. His type of resurrection was not in the Roman vocabulary.

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74. See Cumont, Franz, After Life in Roman Paganism, for a full presentation of the development of the thought.

6. The early Christian traditions must not be overlooked. It is true that many early Christian traditions were molded by Paul- but it must likewise be admitted that it was the Christian message that first turned Paul from narrow Judaism to universal Christianity. It was this group of Christians who preached a living Jesus upon whom Paul breathed death and whom he did his utmost to stamp out. As Headlam says, "He must already have known a good deal about Christianity. Probably he was one of those who had disputed with Stephen. At any rate, he would not have persecuted the Christians unless he had known enough of their opinions to give him a reason for doing so."[75]

It was surely his constant contact with the early Christians with their realistic concept of the living Christ that finally brought the experience to Paul himself. There was no Christian literature for Paul to follow - only personal witnesses. He made occasional trips to Jerusalem and on such occasions conversed with the Christian leaders.[76]

Paul himself felt that he had a background

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75. St. Paul and Christianity, p. 17

76. Gal. 1:18, 2:1

for his resurrection gospel in the early Christian traditions.

"I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures; and that he appeard to Cephas; then to the twelve; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep, then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all . . . . . he appeared to me."[77]

From somewhere - during his persecuting excursions or his educational or missionary wanderings he had gathered these traditions concerning the appearances of Jesus. His own experience was in line with what he thought had already taken place.

There is here no mention of an empty tomb. but only of appearances of which that appearance to Paul was one of a group similar to it.

Paul, then, from early Christian conceptions, inherited none of those grosser physical concepts which have so persistently marked and marred later Christian thought. The gospels, which we have seen to post-date Paul by at least twenty years, hint of a beginning of the purely physical concept. Bowen says in this connection: "As a matter of fact the

77. I. Cor. 15:3-8

chapter (I Cor. 15) rebukes and contradicts the presentation of the gospels more forcibly than it does the errors in Corinth".[78] But even the gospel records are interpreted on a physical plane only by those who desire it to be so interpreted.

It is safe to say that earliest Christian traditions held the resurrection to be on a spiritual plane. At any rate it is certain that Paul so interpreted them. To quote Bowen again: "If we might completely forget the gospel narrative and read Paul for himself we might not always understand his full meaning, but we certainly could by no possibility get the impression that by Jesus' resurrection he means any renewed activity on the part of the buried body."[79]

This is a point in the background of Paul that is often overlooked - with serious consequences in the field of the thought of the resurrection.

7. There is left, then, for our consideration only the personal factor of Paul's own experience. There is no doubt but what this is of tremendous importance. The personality of the man Paul stands out in all his writings. His writings are not a system of philosophy or of ethics, or even

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79. Same, p. 149

80. Article on "The Resurrection and Ascension Narratives" in Encyclopedia Biblica

a certain type of religion. They are more than anything else windows through which we may behold the soul of the man himself.

It is after all Paul's experience which is at the heart of our study. "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection", is a personal statement. It has no significance apart from Paul himself.

Schmiedel writes of Paul's experience almost from the point of modern psychology.[80] According to him Paul arrived at his conception of the resurrection through a long struggle within himself. Paul finally arrived at his conclusions through these stages:
(1) The persecution of the Christians because they preached that one who had been marked by God as a criminal was the Messiah.

(2) In defending their position they had quoted effectively from the old Testament so that Paul had to admit its general truth, though not applicable to a crucified one.

(3) Paul learned to know their conviction that Jesus had appeared alive

(4) Paul recognized the sincerity and honesty of the Christians whom he persecuted.

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80. Article on "The Resurrection and Ascension Narratives" in Encholopedia Biblica

(5) There was no satisfaction in Paul's own inner life.

(6) Paul recognized that in the Old Testament God had promised a time of salvation.

(7) Paul began to connect this idea with the crucified Christ of which he had heard so much.

(8) It could be only through the death of Jesus, then, that God could bring about this salvation.

(9) But yet Jesus had been accursed and crucified, carrying with it a curse for all men. This could only be lifted by a divine act and the resurrection is that divine declaration of the guiltlessness of Jesus.

Schmiedel here goes into much detail to fathom Paul's mind. His logic is good. It is perhaps fairly true to Paul's thinking, for his analysis is based upon Paul's recorded experience, but it fails utterly to catch the dynamic of Paul's faith in the resurrection. It makes out of Paul's experience of the resurrection a mere conclusion, not a power.

A case can be made out that Paul was prone to various visions and ecstatic conditions.[81] One who is more interested in psycho-analysis than in

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81. II Cor. 12:1-4, I Cor. 14:18, Acts 16:9, 18:9, 22:17, 27:23

the appreciation of personality could have a glorious time interpreting the experiences of Paul. He could become one who exhibited many abnormal quirks. All of which is quite beside the point.

The most important characteristic of Paul's experience is his deep mysticism. It is also the element in Paul's teaching hardest to interpret.

Paul had a definite feeling of communion with the living Christ. He was a "Christ-mystic". Deissman points out the fact that the formula phrase "in Christ" or "in the Lord" occurs 164 times in Paul's writing. "It is", he says,"really the characteristic expression of his Christianity".[82] This seems to be a phrase that Paul coined and is expressive of his mystical character.

Paul's mysticism, although parallel to, is vastly different from that practiced by the mystery religions of his day. Cave speaks of this relationship: "The mystery-cults commemorated gods who did not give themselves for men, but were the victims of their fate. The death and reappearing of these gods were not thought of as historic facts. They were a dramatic presentation of the decay and

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82. Paul, p. 140

revival of plant life, and the rites by which this was portrayed were more important to the worshippers than the legends which gathered around them. St Paul's devotion was not to a mythic figure. The Lord in whom he lived was one with the Jesus who had been crucified, whom many of Paul's fellow-believers had known on earth. It is here that we have the decisive difference between Paul's 'Christ-mysticism' and the mysticism of the mystery-cults."[83]

As far as Paul was concerned, Christ was alive in him. He was a virile, invincible Christ who was the source of Paul's tremendous strength. Paul's mystical experience of Christ stands as the greatest monuments to his toric mysticism.

Thus the "power of his resurrection" became to Paul the dynamic force of the risen Christ living in him driving him forth into a gigantic missionary enterprise and to great ethical living.

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83. The Gospel of St. Paul, pp. 53-4

CHAPTER IV - A CRITICAL STUDY OF PAUL'S WRITING CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION.

The fact is established that there was an almost unfathomed historic sequence reaching back from and leading up to Paul's own convictions concerning the resurrection of Jesus. Paul's own attitudes have been touched lightly, but not exploited. Our task is now to make a definite study of writings of Paul himself in their historical background. It should prove the most valuable source in finding the "power of his resurrection". At least we are at last dealing directly with primary sources, Paul's own letters.

A study of the Greek words and phrases employed by Paul and the use which he made of them will contribute to an understanding of the man and his message.

The word most relevant to our study is the noun ἀνάστασις, used wherever the actual word "resurrection" is employed in the English text.[1] It is the noun counterpart of the verb ἀνίστημι, meaning "to cause to stand up", "to raise up", "restore", "rouse to action", and "raise from the dead". The noun may include all these various colorings. Moulton and Milligan say that the noun is most often used in the sense of "erection", i.e., of a monument.[2] The meaning is natural. The raising of Jesus

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1. Romans 1:4, 6:5; I Corinthians 15:12,13,21,42; Philippians 3:10. The compound ἐξανάστασιν is used in Phil. 3:11. The use of ἐξ is not important, however, it refers only to the ἐκ νεκρῶν in the same phrase.

2. The Vocabulary of the Greek of the Greek Text, pp. 3T-8.

from the dead became to Paul a monument in Christian experience, and the use of the word as a cult token was appropriate. To Paul, and evidently to the Christians to whom he wrote, the word held a technical meaning which he did not take the pains to explain. To them it was simply "The Resurrection" - a standing event in their minds.[3] It is true that it lent itself to physical or spiritual interpretation, but, however interpreted, the event was the same - the triumph of Jesus over death with its attendant hope for all Christians.

There is little question but what this word carried with it the thought of the raising up of the body. Else there would have been no need of Paul to go into detail to describe the resurrected body.[4] The word certainly suggests the restoration of the body. The preposition ἀνά, "up", presupposes a going down, either into the grave, or the nether world. Thus whatever goes into the lower region is that which emerges from it. Bowen is largely right when he says: "Resurrection meant, to Paul and his readers alike, not that the soul continues to exist, but that it is re-embodied, that it has another life. The very word ἀνάστασις, "up-standing", posits the ancient view of the lower world, Hades, up from which souls may come. It meant always for these first-century men, Jews and Greeks alike, Josephus, Paul and the Corinthians, resurrection of the body, or better, resurrection in the body."[5] Bowen's insistence here carried him too far,

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3. See Lidell and Scott - Lexicon II 3,c
4. I Corinthians 15:35-49
5. The Resurrection in the New Testament, p. 76

however. There is really very little grounds for holding that the preposition ἀνά necessarily posits a going down into either the grave or the world below. The recumbent position of the body in death, or in sleep, if death be so conceived, would account for the expression ἀνάστασις. Further, we have found in our discussion of the Greek religious concepts, that it was not necessarily the physical body that descended into Hades, but the soul. Thus resurrection for the Greek lent itself readily to spiritual interpretation. Paul insisted on them conceiving it in concrete terms of the body, but the Greek concept had tempered his thought, so that the "incorruptible body" is the result.[6]

The verb most often employed by Paul in this connection is ἐγείρω ,[7] meaning "to awaken", "rouse up", "raise or erect a building", and "raise from the dead". The meaning is clear here. It is not a cult word nor a technical one. It denotes being raised from the dead, or awakened from the sleep of death, but there is no such a thing as "power" connected with this word. The raising is through another power altogether - it is God who raises from the dead.

ὁ δὲ θεὸς καὶ τὸν κύριον ἤγειρεν
καὶ ἡμᾶς ἐξεγερεῖ διὰ τῆς δυνάμεως
αὐτοῦ[8]

(For God both raised the Lord, and will raise up us through his power).

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6. See below, pg.
7. Rom. 4:24,25; 6:4,9; 7:4; 8:11; 10:9; I Cor. 6:14; 15:15,16,17,35,42,43,44,52; II Cor. 1:9; 4:14; Gal. 1:1 Col. 2:12; I Thess. 1:10 - Rom. 9:17; I Cor. 6:14
8. I Cor. 6:14

There may be point to a reference to the perfect tense in connection with this verb. Robertson and Plummer have called attention to the perfect indicative tense of the verb in I Corinthians 15:4.[9] Paul here uses a list of verbs in the aorist indicative proclaiming the gospel which he had delivered to the Corinthians. "Christ died (ἀπέθανεν), was buried (ἐτάφη), and hath been raised (ἐγήγερται-perfect indicative). I need not go into the various meanings of the perfect tense, but the sudden shift to the perfect is at least surprising here. It directs attention to the existing state. Robertson claims that the shift is a matter of emphasis and "Paul means to emphasize that Jesus is still risen by the present perfect."[10] Robertson's and Plummer's words are, "The change is from aorists of what took place once for all to the perfect of a result which abides; - he remains alive as the Risen one."

I do not believe that by this change in tense Paul meant to put the "raising" upon a different plane from the "dying" and "burying". He conceived all three as part of the same phenomenom. But the abiding element in the perfect of the verb is well taken.

One more Greek word which must be examined is the noun δύναμις, "power". The meaning of this word is of major importance in our study.

It is likewise a very important word in the New Testament. The Concordance to the Greek Testament[11] lists

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9. I Corinthians ~~Romans~~ - ICC, p. 334
10. The Minister and His Greek New Testament, p. 101
11. Moulton and Geden

the word as being used 118 times, 48 times in the epistles of Paul.

The simple meaning of the word is "power", or "the means by which to do a thing". Thus it would be the counterpart of the verb δύναμαι, "to be able". But its use in literature seems to suggest more than the mere fact of having means. The English words "dynamic", "dynamo", and "dynamite" which have descended from the Greek ancestor suggest something of the meaning which the word came to acquire.

Power expressed in this word is an ultimate, basic thing. It is not the power of authority. The Greeks have a word for that (ἐξουσία). Δύναμις expresses the ultimate driving force within the universe. The "power of God" (δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ) is often spoken of.[12] The "power of the Spirit" (δύναμις τοῦ πνεύματος)[13] appears, as does also the "power of our Lord Jesus Christ" (δυνάμει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ)[14] There is a striking reference to Christ, the power of God (Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν)[15] Paul's reference to powers (δυνάμεις) as being adverse forces[16] is a case in point here. It is true, then, that power, as conceived by Paul, was a latent force. Thus when he speaks of the "power" of his resurrection (τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως) he would indicate that the Resurrection

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12. I Cor. 1:18; II Cor. 4:7; 6:7; 13:4; Rom. 1:16, etc.
13. Acts 1:8; Rom. 15:13,19
14. I Cor. 5:4, II Cor. 12:9
15. I Cor. 1:24
16. Rom. 8:38

has power within itself. Just as there was power of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, there was power of the Resurrection.

One fact laying back of this is no doubt that there was confusion of terms in Paul's vocabulary. Perhaps it is not so much confusion as it is freedom in the use of various terms without recourse to definition. Many of the terms employed by Paul are ultimately quite synonymous. The living Christ and the Holy Spirit have never been successfully divorced in our understanding of Paul's thought.[17] It is known among scholars that it was Paul who brought about the deification of Jesus[18]. Thus even the power of God can be thought of as somewhat synonymous with the power of the Spirit and of the Lord Jesus Christ. By following this line of thought a case could probably be made out identifying the technical term "Resurrection", with the spirit of Christ - thus resolving our whole study into nothing more than a profusion of words. And it must be admitted that in a large measure these terms are identical. To speak of a power of one or the other is to speak of one or more phases of a universal power. Each term, however, gives a separate approach to the discovery of that ultimate power, δύναμις.

There is another shade of meaning in this word to which Ramsay calls attention. There was a certain mystical atmosphere surrounding the idea of power. For instance, there was Simon, the Samaritan sorcerer, of whom

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17. See Rom. 8:9-11, II Cor. 3:17
18. Cf. Robertson and Plummer - I Corinthians, ICC, p. 124

men said, "This man is that power of God which is called Great".[19] Ramsay says of him, "He was an epiphany (to use the Greek term), or avatar (to use the Hindu), of that Supreme Power"[20] It was, and is, the task of the mystic to discover and utilize divine power. This, like all other such mystical practices, became embodied in cults. To quote again from Ramsay: "The word 'power' (δύναμις) was technical in the language of religion, superstition, and magic, and was one of the most common and characteristic terms in the language of pagan devotion. 'Power' was what the devotees respected and worshipped; any exhibition of 'power' must have its cause in something that was divine."[21]

Power, then, was something to catch hold of and use, something lying latent which the mystic could utilize if only he entered into that divine relationship so that he might receive the power.

Something like this may have been behind Paul's eager interest in knowing "the power of his resurrection . . . . . and attaining unto the resurrection of the dead."

All these elements are found in Paul's thought. Surely it was mystical experience that he longed for in reaching the ultimate power of his resurrection. Yet it was not so much a magic something to be controlled and thereby work wonders. It seemed to be an entrance into

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19. Acts 8:10
20. The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament, p. 117
21. The same, p. 118

that "power" which to Paul was the very essence of the Spirit of Christ, of God, and yea, even of the Resurrection!

One more approach to Paul must be made - by sketching some of his expressed attitudes toward the resurrection. The study here shall in no sense be an exegesis of the Pauline writings, but only a study of the occasions at which Paul was inclined to make us of the gospel of the resurrection.

The most lengthy and complete reference to the doctrine of the resurrection is that found in I Corinthians 15. Robertson and Plummer have called this chapter "the earliest Christian doctrinal essay".[22] It is in this chapter that we find, if not the source of "the power of his resurrection", at least the doctrinal background which was behind the power.

The importance of the chapter in historic Christian theology cannot be overestimated. It is largely the sole source of any real doctrine concerning the resurrection of Jesus. The gospels furnished bare facts of history -- but Paul furnished the doctrine, and as a result, the theology which it implies.

Our study of the Greek mind and attitudes toward immortality and bodily resurrection gave us a rich background for the study of this chapter. The Corinthian church was a Greek church. There were no doubt Jews in the commercial city of Corinth, but it is the concensus of opinion of scholars that the Corinthian church was pre-

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22. I Corinthians - ICC, p. 329

dominantly a Gentile church. This fact is almost self-evident from the nature of the problems and inquiries that had arisen within the church.

The Greek mind simply could not accept the doctrine of a resurrection of the body. Thus Paul was forced to formulate a very definite doctrine which could stand in the face of Greek philosophy. The vehemence of the chapter is due to the fact that Paul recognized the importance of the task which was thus presented to him. Questions such as this came to him as a challenge to his Christianity and to his whole Judaistic frame of thinking.

Briefly, the chapter teaches this:

1. That the gospel of the resurrection is not a man-conceived doctrine. It is a reality and can be proved by the witness of individuals living, including Paul himself. (Verses 1-11).

2. That the doctrine of the resurrection must be incorporated in the Christian message else there is no point whatever to Christianity. (vs. 12-19)

3. That the resurrection of Jesus has ushered in a new concept of life, including the power of life over death and the final rule of God over all things. (vs. 20-29)

4. That a denial of the resurrection has its religious and moral consequences. Moral living has no meaning without the concept of resurrection. (vs. 29-34)

5. That it is in accord with nature itself to raise the dead. God is continually changing the form of bodies when they enter into new relationships. (vs. 35-38)

6. That there is a dualism which must be recog-

nized, both in nature and in this matter of resurrection. There is a natural and a spiritual body - one just as real as the other. (vs. 39-49)

7. That in the resurrection the physical body is immediately changed to a spiritual one -- an incorruptible one. (vs. 50-53)

8. That herein lies the triumph of good over evil, of life over death, and the foundation of Christian living. (vs. 54-58)

In the face of such a presentation as Paul here gives one cannot but be impressed with the force of his teaching. It is no wonder that such thoroughgoing reasoning and clarity of presentation has held such sway in the Christian church.

Yet, has it really held sway in the Christian message? We are almost equally impressed with the fact that Paul has been so thoroughly misunderstood.

It is a mistake to say that Paul preached the physical resurrection, yet how often that has been preached -- using Paul as a basis for such preaching! There is no suggestion of the physical even in the appearances as described by Paul. There is no empty tomb, no walking in the garden, not even pictorial imagery to suggest a physical resurrection. Paul, in this chapter seems to say something like this:

"You who doubt the resurrection must see that it is tremendously real, for there is such overwhelming evidence of the living Christ. Yet you must see that it is to be conceived on a spiritual plane. The resurrection demands such a change of concept!"

This chapter must have been "hard doctrine" for both Jews and Greeks. It was more realistic than the Greeks were accustomed to, and too highly spiritual for the Jew of Paul's day. Yet it was the combination of the two which has given this chapter its lasting qualities. In the light of Paul's day, then, such a doctrine can almost be described as a "powerful" one.

There is another sense in which Paul speaks of the resurrection. It could probably best be termed as the mystical approach to an understanding of the resurrection. This content in Paul's total concept is best illustrated in Romans 6:1-11.

> "For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."[23]

We have already tried to appreciate Paul through the mystical nature which was so obviously his. Surely an understanding of "being united with him in

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23. Rom. 6:5

the likeness of his death[24] . . . . . and of his resurrection" lies in this field. Paul felt himself to be so united with the living Christ that the resurrection could be only a natural part of such a mystical experience.

In a sense Paul felt the cult ritual of baptism to be an entrance into just such an union with the death and resurrection of Jesus. (Rom. 6:4). At least it was his desire that it should so be. In such a way as that the living Jesus was to become a living force of life, making it new in union with the resurrected Jesus.

Another important point to note here is that Paul conceived the resurrection to be something which changed life. "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Something about Jesus' resurrection gave a new content to life so that it became "new". The same thought is expressed negatively in I Corinthians 15 when Paul speaks of the futility of moral living if the resurrection be not so. Here the positive side is brought out with full force - the resurrection changes the entire

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24. The marginal reading "for if we have become united with the likeness of his death" is a more literal translation of εἰ γὰρ σύμφυτοι γεγόναμεν τῷ ὁμοιώματι τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ

concept. It has a transforming power!!

This approach leads directly to an intelligent understanding of the use of the phrase "the power of his resurrection" spoken of in Philippians 3:10.

Here too, Paul's principle concern is for a deeper enrichment of his mystical life. Knowing the power of Jesus' resurrection was to him on a par with the "fellowship of his sufferings", and "becoming conformed to his death". In other words, it was in the realm of experience. His prayer was that he might enter more fully into these experiences of Jesus, and thereby attain the highest spiritual experience -- the resurrection from the dead.

J. A. Robertson calls such a knowledge of the "power of his resurrection" a "living intimacy with the living Christ . . . . . it is not the power which brought about the resurrection, but power which his risen life gives to those that are in him."[25]

Rainy gives the phrase the homiletical caption, "Resurrection Life and Daily Living" and says concerning it, "When Paul says that he would know

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25. Abingdon Commentary

Christ and the power of his resurrection he aims at a life (already his, but capable of far more adequate development) conformed to the life which triumphed in the risen Christ, one with that in principle, in character, and in destiny."[26]

The point is that Paul had discovered through a mystical connection with the resurrection experience of Jesus a dynamic force for personal living. This fact, coupled with philosophical, doctrinal, and historical backgrounds, made up for Paul "the power of his resurrection".

There surely must be important meaning in Paul's second use of the term "resurrection" in verse 11 - "that I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead". It is clear that he had in mind ~~x~~ two separate concepts. One was a power lying within the fact of the resurrection of Jesus, and the other was an actual resurrection out of death (ἐξανάστασις) in which Paul himself, along with other believers, could share. The second, however, was contingent upon the former. It was part of the power of Jesus' resurrection that it gave hope of resurrection to all Christisns.

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26. Expositors' Bible

CHAPTER V - THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

One question perhaps has not been answered in this inquiry - how, then, can we conceive of the resurrection of Jesus as having power? At this stage of the study we pretty well know the meaning of resurrection and of power, but as yet the two are only loosely correlated. But it still remains a fact that to Paul the resurrection of Jesus itself was a definite source of power which was a great force in his own life. Perhaps a good summary of this paper may bring to our minds what this power must be. It is not necessary to go into further detail here, for we need only to review some of our findings to bring them definitely to bear upon this question.

1. Paul recognized and insisted that the message of Christianity was thoroughly inadequate without the gospel of the resurrection. "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain." "If we have only hoped in this life, we are of all men most pitiable."

Then, to put content, triumph, and power into his Christian message he vehemently preached the resurrection of Jesus. In such a way Paul conceived the resurrection of Jesus to be the real power of his gospel.

2. Paul knew from his background that a

conception of resurrection was essential to dynamic religion. He knew something of the rise and fall of religions ancient and modern. He knew the decadent state of ancient Judaistic religion and of the old Greek religion. He likewise knew the new power which they took on with the coming of the mystery cults in Greek religion and of apocalypticism in Jewish and Parsee religion. The doctrine of the resurrection had much in common with both these elements. Thus Paul saw in the resurrection of Jesus a dynamic force which he determined to put forth.

3. Paul discovered a real philosophy of resurrection. To him the resurrection offered no technical problems. It fit in with his philosophy of God, of the universe. God could raise up a man, and he did raise up Jesus, and through him made all alive.

To get hold of a profound principle, to discover a genuine basis for it, and to be so convicted of it as was Paul of the resurrection, is in itself a power. To possess such a principle and to be willing to stake one's life upon its truth -- such will be power.

4. Paul found power in the resurrection in its spiritual nature. The resurrection, to Paul, was not an ordinary phenomenom. In preaching it he was speaking of the very nature of the spiritual world. It

raised men completely above the tribulations of life and gave them victory and power on a spiritual plane. Thus at the close of his life he could speak of it as the greatest attainment and the goal of living, and he could live in glad abandon because of the resurrection.

5. Paul found a mystical power in the resurrection. Perhaps some of this came from the mystery religions, but in Christian rites Paul taught his readers to think of them as initiating them into a living experience of Jesus -- that dying with Christ and being buried with him they might also live with him. No one who knows the power of a mystical rite can deny the power of the resurrection in the early church. The elevation of the "host" - the living presence - in Roman churches of today is one of the great powers that lead men of our day. The Resurrection, then, in personal mystical life, or in technical ritualistic cult use, was a power in early Christianity.

6. There was transforming power in the resurrection. Paul considered that it was the resurrection of Jesus which gave such content to life that life became new. The old life was buried with Christ at baptism, and through the resurrection of Jesus it was then raised to newness of life. It was to the resurrection of Jesus that Paul attributed the changed

life of the Christian.

7. For Paul there was power in the fact that resurrection furnished a goal of life. "That I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" furnished him with a goal which was one of the driving forces of life. He was anxious to share with Jesus in being raised out of death, ἐξανάστασις. One dare not minimize the constraining force such a goal would be.

8. Paul felt the power of the resurrection in his own life and could not help but preach it as the power of the Christian message. It was the meeting with the living Christ upon the Damascus road that had changed the life of Paul and had sent him out to become the most powerful propagator the world has ever known. The resurrection, in its spiritual conception, lay back of that experience, and Paul knew it to be so. It is no wonder that, in terms of his own experience, he was led to speak of the power of his resurrection.

9. The very reality of the resurrection made it a powerful message. There is no question but what Paul conceived of the resurrection in spiritual terms, but no man ever spoke of spiritual experience in more realistic terms. Every bit of Jewish imagery was brought in to make it more realistic. Paul did not risk losing the strength of his message through

spiritualization. Herein, perhaps, lies one of the greatest reasons why the "power of his resurrection" still moves the world.

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